

Board of County Commissioners

Leon County, Florida

Policy No. 98-29

Title: Employee Innovation Program
Date Adopted: October 13, 1998
Effective Date: October 13, 1998
Reference: N/A
Policies Superseded: Policy No. 94-9, "Gain Sharing Program" adopted 11/15/94

It shall be the policy of the Board of County Commissioners of Leon County, Florida that Policy 94-9, adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on November 15, 1994 is hereby repealed and superseded and a new policy adopted in its place, to wit:

A program for rewarding employees' suggestions for productivity and cost savings is hereby adopted and shall be administered in accordance with the provisions as outlined and attached to this policy. The Board of County Commissioners may amend these procedures from time to time as it deems appropriate in the best interest of its employees and the citizens of Leon County.

The program of rewarding employee suggestions for productivity and cost savings shall be known as the Employee Innovation Program (EIP). The EIP shall recognize and compensate individual employees who propose procedures or ideas which are adopted and which result in eliminating or reducing County expenditures, provided such proposals are placed in effect. Each program and group director shall encourage employees to participate in the Employee Innovation Program.

The Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee, with the assistance of the Employee Relations Analyst, shall oversee the EIP. All applications submitted to will be circulated to all group directors and other appropriate employees for review and recommendations.

The acceptance of a cash award for any suggestion adopted through the program shall constitute an agreement by the employee that all claims, immediate and future, on Leon County, regardless of the use made of the suggestion, will be waived.

PROGRAM REVIEW STAFF

1. The Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee shall review all proposals.
2. The Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee shall be responsible for the activities listed below.
 - a. Communicate the programs to employees.
 - b. Assure that all program goals and requirements are met.
 - c. Review, investigate and evaluate all suggestions submitted by eligible employees and all recommendations from directors and managers concerning the suggestions.
 - d. Determine the net cost savings of each suggestion and keep employees informed as to the status of their suggestions during the evaluation process.
 - e. Make recommendations to the County Administrator who shall make a final decision as to whether the suggestion should be implemented. Payment of awards will require the County Administrator's approval.

DEFINITIONS

1. Suggestion - is a written idea proposed by an eligible employee of Leon County to the Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee. The suggestion must clearly indicate a specific method to improve a work process, add value to a service, reduce costs or increase revenues.

2. Net Increase in Revenue - is defined as the estimated first year net increase in revenue resulting from the adoption and implementation of a suggestion. Net savings means the estimated first year net cost avoidance/reduction resulting from the adoption and implementation of a suggestion.
3. Amortized- is defined as the cost of capital expenditures which will be spread over the useful life of the equipment or a period specified by the Finance Department. Direct labor costs of implementation will be considered first year costs. Indirect or administrative costs of implementation shall be amortized over a three-year period.
4. Intangible - is defined as suggestions involving improvements in working conditions, changes in procedures, revisions of forms, improvement in employee morale, or employee health or safety, for which the monetary value cannot be precisely determined.
5. Tangible - is defined as suggestions for which monetary value can be precisely determined.

ELIGIBILITY OF SUGGESTIONS

1. Suggestions shall be submitted in writing to the Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee or the Employee Relations Analyst in the Staff and Organizational Development Division.
2. All suggestions will be accepted for review by the Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee.
3. If a suggestion is not implemented, it is not eligible for an award.
4. If a suggestion has been implemented prior to submittal to the Employee Innovation Program, it must be submitted within ninety (90) days after implementation to be eligible for a cash award. The implementation date starts with the initiation of pilot programs, test periods or full implementation throughout the department. Suggestions must be submitted within 90 days of the department action.
5. Suggestions which are related to the following subjects shall not be eligible for consideration:

- a. Complaints, criticisms, or other proposals which do not include constructive and specific means for improving County operations.
- b. Suggestions which relate to the need for routine/and or regularly scheduled maintenance and repair work.
- c. Suggestions which call for routine or normal safety practices.
- d. Suggestions where it is obvious that the potential benefits from adoption would not offset the cost of processing.
- e. Suggestions of salary increases, job reclassifications, liberalization of leave policies and similar improvements in employee compensation and benefits; (However, a suggestion dealing with a procedural improvement in a personnel matter, such as a proposed revision in a form, may be eligible for consideration by the Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee.
- f. Suggestions to have a "survey," "study," or "review" with a course of action to be taken in accordance with the findings.
- g. Suggestions for services and benefits to employees, e.g., vending machines, cafeteria services, rest room facilities, parking facilities or holidays.
- h. Joint submittals. These submittals may be submitted through the gain sharing program.
- i. suggestions which directly relate to the employee's performance of his or her assigned duties and responsibilities and in which the employee has authority to implement without authorization of the employee's supervisors.
- j. suggestions of stricter or more flexible enforcement of already existing rules, regulations, and policies which currently exist.

DUPLICATE SUGGESTIONS

- 1. If duplicate suggestions are received by the Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee, the one bearing the earliest date of receipt shall be eligible for consideration and all others shall be ineligible.
- 2. Each suggestion shall be reviewed to determine if it is a duplicate of, or similar to, a suggestion which has previously been submitted or adopted.

EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY

All employees under the Board of County Commissioners and directed by the County

Administrator shall be eligible for the Employee Innovation Program with the following exceptions:

- a. Executive Service.
- b. Senior Management.

SPECIAL AWARD

The County Administrator may elect to reward Executive and Senior Management employees because of innovative suggestions which result in superior savings, innovative safety programs or service improvements.

1. The suggestion must not directly relate to the employee's assigned duties and responsibilities. Program directors will submit names of the employee to the appropriate Group Director. Upon approval by the Group Director, the Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee will review the project and make a recommendation to the County Administrator.
2. The remainder of the process for determining the amount and payment of award will follow the criteria listed later in this policy.

MODIFICATION OF IDEAS

If administration modifies an employee's suggestion and adopts the suggestion in a different form, the employee shall be eligible for an award if the employee's suggestion was directly responsible for management's action.

TIME PERIOD ELIGIBILITY

An employee retains the right to an award for a period of twelve (12) months from the date that the suggestion was submitted, and/or during the period of review and implementation, whichever is longer.

SUGGESTION EVALUATION

1. The Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee will decide what evaluation process is needed to determine all matters of cost effectiveness and benefits of implementing the suggestion. The committee is responsible for notifying employees of the status of the suggestion.
2. The Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee may request that departments test the suggestion. During the test period, the department will maintain appropriate cost/and or savings information to allow the committee to evaluate

the merits of the suggestions.

PATENTABLE OR NONPATENTABLE INVENTIONS

1. Suggestions which involve patentable or nonpatentable inventions shall be eligible for awards.
2. Awards for inventions shall be determined on the same basis as awards for other types of suggestions.
3. If a suggestion results in patent rights, the County shall own all rights if a monetary award is given and accepted.

METHODOLOGY FOR DETERMINING SAVINGS

Generally accepted accounting principles will be the guiding influence in determining the savings resulting from the implementation of an employee suggestion. Although each suggestion requires different approaches to determine its financial impact, the list below may be useful in identifying relevant cost elements.

1. Personal Services
 - a. Direct labor cost
 - b. Fringe benefits
 - c. Over-time costs
 - d. Management and administrative costs
2. Equipment or Capital Costs

These costs will be amortized over the life of the equipment. The first year's depreciation is considered as an implementation cost, i.e. A \$10,000 equipment or capital cost with a five-year life expectancy will equal a \$2,000 annual implementation cost.

3. Energy or Fuel Costs

4. Materials and Supplies

- a. Materials - are defined as the raw materials or purchase parts comprising a

major component of the activity under investigation.

- b. Supplies and tools - are defined as items used in order to perform the service, i.e. forms, secretarial supplies, tools, etc.

5. Financial Elements

- a. Interest savings or expense.
- b. Inflation considerations.

6. Miscellaneous Costs

Some additional elements which might be considered are listed below.

- a. Communications (telephone, mail, fax, etc.).
- b. Safety and security measures.
- c. Contractual arrangements (rentals, leases, etc.).
- d. Transportation costs.
- e. Maintenance and repairs.
- f. Inventory levels and down time for equipment.

AWARD CRITERIA

Tangible Awards will be evaluated solely on amount of net savings. Intangible awards will be evaluated on the criteria listed below.

1. Operational Efficiency/Effectiveness: Each suggestion will be evaluated to determine to what degree the organization's efficiency/and or effectiveness has been enhanced by the implementation of the suggestion.
2. Public Image: Each suggestion will be evaluated to determine what degree of the organization's public image has been enhanced by the implementation of the suggestion.
3. Physical Working Conditions: Each suggestion will be evaluated to determine to what degree the work environment and workplace safety has been enhanced by the implementation of the suggestion.
4. Degree of Innovation: Each suggestion, will be evaluated to determine to what degree of innovative and creative effort evidenced by reviewing the following:

- a. Does the suggestion constitute a new "invention" or design of a new product, procedure or system?
or
 - b. Does the suggestion constitute a new application of an existing product, procedure or system?
or
 - c. Does the suggestion constitute an introduction of an existing product, procedure or system to an additional Leon County activity?
5. Extent of Application: Each suggestion will be evaluated to determine the extent to which benefits may be directly or indirectly realized. The following issues will be considered:
- Does the suggestion have applicability to:
- a. A local operation only (one program, section or department)?
 - b. Several programs, sections or departments?
 - c. An entire department?
 - d. Several departments?
 - e. The entire County?
6. Implementation: Each suggestion will be evaluated to determine the level of time and effort required for implementation.
7. Degree of Thoroughness: Each suggestion will be evaluated to determine the degree of thoroughness evidenced by examining the following:
- a. How thoroughly researched was the suggestion?
 - b. How thoroughly developed was the solution (i.e., product, procedure or system) presented by the suggestion?
8. Impact on Employee Morale: Each suggestion will be evaluated to determine to what degree employee morale has been enhanced by the implementation of the suggestion.

9. Conservation of Property and Materials: Each suggestion will be evaluated to determine to what degree County property and/or materials have been conserved by the implementation of the suggestion.
10. Health, Safety and Life of Citizens: Each suggestion will be evaluated to determine the impact of the suggestion upon the health, safety and life of citizens

RANKING AND POINT DETERMINATION FOR INTANGIBLE AWARDS

Points for each category will be awarded based on the criteria listed below. There are a total of ten (10) categories and a possible of **fifty** (50) points.

Category: Operational Efficiency and/or Effectiveness

- 0= None
- 1= Very Little Impact
- 2= Little Impact
- 3= Moderate Impact
- 4= High Impact
- 5= Extremely High Impact

AMOUNT OF AWARD

1. Tangible suggestion awards are 10 percent of the estimated first year's net savings (gross savings less expenses of converting to the adopted suggestion during the first year of implementation) or net increase in revenue. The minimum award amount is \$50 and the maximum award amount is \$2,500.00
2. Intangible suggestion awards are based on the criteria outlined in the Awards Criteria section. The minimum award amount is \$50 and the maximum award amount is \$500.

Point Range	Award Amount
1-5	\$ 50
6-10	\$ 100
11-15	\$ 150
16-20	\$ 200
21-25	\$ 250
26-30	\$ 300
31-35	\$ 350
36-40	\$ 400
41-45	\$ 450
46-50	\$ 500

PAYMENT OF AWARDS

1. Awards for tangible productivity suggestions shall be paid after adoption of the suggestion,

and careful determination of the net savings over the first year of implementation.

2. Payments for intangible awards will be paid after successful adoption and implementation.
3. Awards will consist of a one-time lump sum payment.
4. If the first year's estimated savings were incorrect and the error resulted in overpayment, the employee shall not be required to return any portion of award.
5. Payment of awards will require the County Administrator's approval.

SUGGESTION SUBMITTAL PROCEDURE

Suggestions must be identified on an Employee Innovation Award Application Form submitted to the Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee or the Employee Relations Analyst. All employees will have access to copies of the blank application form. The committee will send a letter to the employee acknowledging receipt of the suggestion and thanking them for participating in the program.

The identity of the employee who submits the suggestion will not be revealed outside of the Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee or Staff and Organizational Development staff. Only after a suggestion has been accepted by the committee and only after permission is received from the employee, can the employee's name be revealed to others.

The Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee will forward the suggestion to the appropriate department director or liaison for evaluation. It will be the responsibility of the department director to assign one or more technically qualified employees to evaluate each suggestion submitted. These evaluations should be completed within 30 days after receipt. If the evaluation of the idea requires additional review time, the department shall notify the Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee or the Employee Relations Analyst in writing.

All recommendations for adoption or rejection must include justification for the decision and must be signed by the Department Director prior to forwarding it to the committee for disposition.

The committee will review and further evaluate the suggestion after receipt of the signed evaluation from the Department Director. After thoroughly reviewing the suggestion, the committee will make its final recommendation to the County Administrator. The employee will be notified within five (5) working days of the County Administrator's final decision.

A letter of recognition will be sent to the employee upon official acceptance of the suggestion by the *County Administrator. A copy of the letter will also be sent to the employee's Department Director, Group Director and the Board of County Commissioners. A copy of the letter will also be placed in the employee's personnel file.

EMPLOYEE INNOVATION PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM

Copies of the Employee Innovation Program Application Form, instructions and evaluation sheet will be available from any Awards of Excellence County-wide Committee chairperson or the Staff and Organizational Development Division office. Also, electronic copies will be available from the Staff and Organizational Development Division office. The assignment of evaluation points may be modified by the County Administrator as long as the award criteria described herein are followed.